

Destination L1: A Thematic Unit

What a Trip!

TEACHER GUIDE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This introductory activity will activate students' prior knowledge about traveling and the preparations they make to take a trip to a far-away place. The objective here is for students to use the benchmarks in the Life Skills standard of "Sets and manages goals" to plan a trip. The process parallels that of mission planners working on the planning phases of a space science mission. The *National Science Education Standards* call for teachers to make media and technology resources available to students. The use of such sources is critical to engaging students in this introductory activity. The activities in this section allow students to think about the process that people go through when planning a trip. Teachers have the option of using one of the student's planned trips as a culminating activity for this unit.

NATIONAL LIFE SKILLS STANDARDS ADDRESSED

(Source - *Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education—3rd Edition*)

K-12

[Sets and manages goals](#)

- Sets explicit long-term goals.
- Identifies and ranks relevant options in terms of accomplishing a goal.
- Prepares and follows a schedule for carrying out options.
- Establishes personal milestones.
- Identifies resources necessary to complete a goal.
- Makes a cumulative evaluation of goal.
- Makes contingency plans.

(View a full text of the [Content Knowledge: 3rd Edition Standards.](#))

NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION STANDARDS ADDRESSED

(Source - *National Technology Education Standards*)

K-12

[Technology productivity tools](#)

Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

[Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools](#)

Students employ technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the real world.

(View a full text of the [National Technology Education Standards.](#))

MATERIALS

For each group of two or three students:

- Student Activity, "[What a Trip!](#)" (Optional)



PROCEDURE

1. Activate prior knowledge about trips by asking students to think back to a time when they had a great experience while traveling. Tell students that the trip did not need to be an expensive vacation. It could have been something as simple as a picnic at a park or a walk with friends. Instruct students to write a short paragraph about the trip giving such details as the destination, when it happened, who was involved, and what made this trip special.
2. Once students have described this special trip, ask them to think about the planning that was involved to make this trip a success. Because students aren't often involved in the planning process, they may have never thought about this before. Ask students to write a second paragraph that describes the trip planning. Encourage them to include as much detail as they can. Allow students to talk to their parents or other adults who were involved in the planning.
3. Working individually or in groups, invite students to write a goal statement about a future trip (real or imagined). Include the destination of the trip in the goal, the length of the trip, the mode of transportation, and something they want to do when they get there.
4. Working as a class, have students assist you in determining the best way to evaluate the goals that students have written, and more importantly how well the proposal would meet the actual goal. In defining a successful trip, allow students to add criteria for determining how well the goal was met. You may want to add the criteria that the trip should have some educational value or a component that relates specifically to your course. You may also want to impose spending limits.
5. Ask students to identify other options that could be employed for the goal to be accomplished. Ask students why having options is important during the planning process. (Answers may include that having extra options is important if circumstances prevent an aspect of their goal from being accomplished.) Instruct students to rank these options according to what they would prefer and then to write a rationale for their ranking.
6. Have students identify tasks that need to be done to make the trip successful. Set a date when the trip should take place. Have the students plan a schedule showing when tasks need to be completed prior to the trip. This schedule should include a timeline for when tasks need to be completed. Students should also indicate who is going to be responsible for various tasks.
7. Students should now spend time identifying resources needed to complete the timeline and tasks. This may include using the Internet to research various locations. Once students dig into these resources, they may find that their original plan is not feasible due to time or cost constraints. Some student groups may have to revise their options or their original goal based on this new information. This is fine. If this happens to a group or an individual, encourage them by saying that this is the type of thing that happens all the time to people who work in the travel industry. Explain that often there is a lot of work done that never results in an actual trip, or worse yet, the trip happens, and people lose time or money because of poor planning. During this planning phase, encourage students to make contingency plans for items on their itinerary that have the potential not to work out. For instance, if the trip is scheduled to take place outside, what would happen if there is inclement weather?

Alternate Strategy Tip

You may give students the option of a trip that could be done as part of a school field trip. If you do this, you may have the added requirement that the trip be educational or fit in with your course curriculum. If you are planning on using this activity for a school trip, you may want to set the date near the end of the school year. As students submit their "proposals" the teacher and administration will need to determine the feasibility of the planned trips using such criteria as cost, time needed, and educational benefit. If you plan on using this option, you may want to start by providing students with a request for proposals inviting students to submit their plans for a school trip.



8. Once students have collected the information and completed each of the steps for the trip planning, have them use this information to prepare a written report. You may work with students to evaluate the reports based on the criteria set forth in procedure #4 above. The written report should include the items found for the student activity sheet, and be based on their research. Collect these sheets once the students have completed them.
9. Relate this experience to the work mission planners do to prepare for a space mission. [*Collaborative Decision Making: NASA's Deep Impact Mission*](#) is a learning module that takes students through the planning process of the Deep Impact space mission. There are texts and activities in this module that provide an experience that will enable students to understand what it is like to plan a NASA mission.

Alternate Strategy Tip

Use the student activity sheet as a template and make it into a word document. That way students will have enough room to type their findings.

TEACHER RESOURCES**URLs**

http://deepimpact.jpl.nasa.gov/collaborative_ed_module/index.html

Collaborative Decision Making: NASA's Deep Impact Mission

http://www.yahooligans.com/around_the_world/Travel/

Yahooligans - links to kid-friendly travel sites